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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the textual data produced by both the participants and the interpreter in George W. Henry's two-volume monograph, "Sex Variants" (1941), a study of homosexuality based on a sample of 80 socially well-adjusted homosexuals from New York City's lesbian and gay community. It is stated that the Henry volumes provide a rich source of data regarding the subjective experiences and sensibilities of a group of marginalized people within a particular historical period and how these people were objectified and marginalized by the medical and scientific community of their day. Three contexts are used in analyzing the monograph: the background of the study; sex research; and the lesbian and gay community. Significant features of the lesbian subculture in the 1920s and 1930s are examined. Two discourses are analyzed: heterosexual adjustment and lesbian emancipation. These conclusions are stated: (1) the life experiences, outlooks, concerns, and goals of the four women's accounts which were examined reveal considerable variability; (2) the women were all struggling with their subjugation to heterosexual adjustment, while at the same time, through being a part of the lesbian/gay community, and through their own life experiences, they were also attempting to empower themselves; (3) heterosexual adjustment prevailed; and (4) to Henry's credit he did record the voices of lesbians and gay men, though unfortunately, at the time, he did not hear them. (ABL)

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EMPOWERMENT VERSUS CONTROL: HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS OF LESBIAN AND GAY LIVES

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In 1937, in a preliminary published report of a study about homosexuality, psychiatrist George W. Henry (1937) presented a case study of "Mary Jones," a 50 year-old black actress. The case study was entitled, "Disillusioned in Marriage. Finds a Substitute in Homosexual Liason." Included in the case study was the following excerpt:

> Finally at the age of 41, while dancing with a woman, "something very terrific happened to me--a very electric thing. It made me know I was homosexual.". . . This woman. . ."has come to be very, very dear to me--not just for sex alone--it's a very great love. . . .This last relationship affords a tenderness I have never known." (Henry, 1937, p. 898)

In this case study, we have a juxtaposition of third-person, psychiatric interpretation (the title) and first-person, experiential narrative (the quotes). This contrast in genre was given fuller expression in Henry's (1941) two-volume monograph, entitled Sex Variants, based on a sample of 80 "socially well adjusted homosexuals" from New York City's lesbian and gay community.

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Henry's study was sponsored by the Committee for the Study of Sex Variants, a privately funded and incorporated body, established in 1935 by Robert L. Dickinson. Dickinson was a prominent gynecologist who was also one of the leaders of the American birth control movement and a pioneer in sex research (Gordon, 1990; Reed, 1978). The Committee was composed of medical specialists (including Henry) and social scientists who were active in the study of homosexuality and, as a reflection of the legal constraints of the time, also included a former New York City Correction Commissioner (see Minton, 1986).

What is especially noteworthy about the Committee's origins is the involvement of the lesbian and gay community. Dickinson had been in contact with a "Miss Jan Gay" who had collected 300 case studies of lesbians over a ten-year period (Dickinson, 1934, 1935). Among her case studies were 50 lesbians living in New York (the group from which Henry derived his sample). Unknown to Dickinson or any of the other members of the Committee, Gay was a lesbian who used the pseudonym "Gay," a popular codeword in the lesbian and gay community of the 1930s (Chauncey, 1989; Terry, 1990). Moreover, Gay provided the means for funding Henry's research project in her role as a conduit for an anonymous donor, described as "a private citizen, a man of outstanding vision and filled with enthusiasm for scientific research" (Henry, 1941, p. viii). The "donor," who provided a total

of $7,500, was most likely a member of the gay community and with his financial prowess, probably a prominent member.

Gay continued to play a central role in Henry's study since she was responsible for recruiting the sample. She screened prospective subjects and if they indicated a willingness to participate, she obtained the demographic data that Henry used in his interviews. Thus, Gay (and through her efforts, the lesbian and gay community) initiated, funded, and contributed to a large-scale self-selected study of lesbian and gay men--quite an achievement some thirty years before the gay liberation movement. Although, unaware of this scenario, Henry (1941) attested to the high degree of motivation among his research subjects by commenting:

> Most of them welcomed an opportunity to participate in a scientific and medical study of their development and of their problems. Through this study they hope for a better understanding of their maladjustments and as a consequence a more tolerant attitude of society toward them. (p. x)

Henry's (1941) monograph includes the autobiographical narratives he obtained from his psychiatric interviews of 40 lesbians and 40 gay men. The interviews were open-ended with some "guidance" on the part of Henry so that a standard series of topics and questions would be covered, including family history, personal history, sexual practices, and the participants' own attitudes toward homosexuality. According to Henry (1941), the personal accounts were:

> [C]omposed almost entirely of statements made by the subject which I have edited to make a connected history. By this device I have preserved the language of the subject as well as the facts relating to his [sic] development. (p. xi)

At the end of each case, Henry provided a section dealing with his own comments and interpretations. The data also included responses to questionnaires (the Terman-Miles masculinity-femininity test) and indices of various physical examinations (see Minton, 1986, Terry, 1990).

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the textual data produced by both the participants and the interpreter (i.e. Henry). The Henry volumes provide a rich source of data regarding the subjective experiences and sensibilities of a group of marginalized people within a particular historical period. In addition, we can also examine how these people were objectified and marginalized by the medical and scientific community of their day.

Method

The method I will be using is a form of discourse analysis (see Hollway, 1989; Parker, 1992). This is an interpretive method which is based on texts, that is written or spoken or even nonverbal forms of communication. In the Henry study, the autobiographical accounts and the psychiatric commentary constitute textual materials. A discourse refers to a network of meanings about a particular phenomenon or concept, such as homosexuality in the case of the Henry study. Discourses contain subjects, that is

people who are being talked about and what people are saying about themselves and others. A discourse refers to other discourses, and consequently in a discourse analysis, one looks for contrasting ways of speaking, contradictions, and so forth. Another major characteristic is that a discourse is historically located--part of the interpretive process involves trying to make sense of a network of statements in terms of their historical context. Discourses are also intricately connected with the social structure: they have the potential to support existing institutions, they can reproduce power relations, and they have ideological effects. Thus, in a discourse analysis one has to look for the nature of power relations--to what extent do given discourses contribute to domination, or on the other hand to what extent do they serve as sources of resistance.

Discourse analysis is derived from post-structuralism, especially the work of Foucault. The particular variant of discourse analysis that I have found useful is Wendy Hollway's (1989) "interpretative discourse analysis," which combines features of Foucault with psychoanalytic thought (primarily the British object relations school). Thus, Hollway analyzes discourse in terms of historical context as well as interpersonal dynamics. With respect to the latter, she tries to interpret the way in which discourse reveals power relations and desire at both conscious and unconscious levels.

Contexts

In analyzing the texts in the Henry monograph, I will draw on three contexts: the background of the study, sex research, and the lesbian and gay community. Regarding the first, I have already indicated how the study was generated and who the key players were. What is most significant are the two groups of individuals involved, that is the Sex Variants Committee and the particular lesbian and gay community which helped instigate as well as participate in the study. To make sense of their contrasting motivation and objectives, we need to look at the larger social, cultural, and intellectual networks they were a part of.

Sex Research

By the 1930s, it was a well-established assumption in the medical and scientific community that homosexuality was pathological. The roots of this assumption go back to 18th-century Europe when sexual matters began to receive increasing medical and scientific attention (Bullough, 1976; Foucault, 1979). By the 19th century in both America and Europe, the popular and medical view was that all nonprocreative sex was pathological. Homosexuality began to be singled out as a specific form of nonprocreative sex towards the end of the 19th century, and with the goals of treatment and prevention in mind, medical discourse was concerned with etiology. The most dominant explanation was

the notion of sexual inversion, that is gender-role reversal (Chauncey, 1982/1983).

The gender inversion model continued to be influential in the 1930s. While earlier versions, such as those of Krafft-Ebing (1908) and Ellis (1915), emphasized the role of congenital determinants, the more current versions stressed environmental causes situated in the family. Lewis M. Terman and Catharine Cox Miles (1936) reached such a conclusion about homosexuality in their study of masculinity-femininity. Both Terman and Miles were members of the Sex Variants Committee. Henry (1937), in his preliminary report of the Sex Variants study, also expressed the same explanation. His prescription for prevention read as follows:

> Under ideal circumstances the father should be an understanding, tolerant but virile and decisive male. The mother should have the gentleness, patience and passivity usually associated with womanhood. Any mixture, such as an effeminate father and an aggressive masculine mother is likely to be disconcerting to the child and accentuate homosexual tendencies. (Henry, 1937, p. 903)

The Lesbian and Gay Community

Beginning in the 1870s, lesbian and gay communities emerged in American cities (Adam, 1987; D'Emilio, 1983). By the 1920s and 1930s, they became relatively stable and more differentiated in terms of social background and styles. During this period, New York was home to one of the largest and most vibrant lesbian and gay communities (Chauncey, 1989; Garber, 1989). Centered in Greenwich Village and

Harlem, lesbians and gay men created cultural institutions and rituals (such as drag balls which attracted thousands of participants in the 1920s) which sustained their social networks and enhanced their sense of group identity. It was this particular community whose voices were recorded in Henry's monograph--a community that was largely made up of professionals, artists, musicians, writers, and people connected with the theater. There were also more marginalized subgroups not identified with the gay community, such as young men from impoverished backgrounds who were frequently arrested as sex offenders. Henry (Henry & Gross,1938), under the auspices of the Sex Variants Committee, undertook a brief but separate investigation of such a group which he labeled as "underprivileged homosexuals."

In order to analyze the texts that I will be looking at, it is important to draw some distinctions between the experiences and life styles of lesbians and gay men. Since I am going to illustrate my analysis by citing lesbian texts, I will briefly refer to some of the significant features of the lesbian subculture of the 1930s. During the sexual revolution of the 1920s, with its permissiveness towards bisexuality, there was a certain degree of tolerance for lesbianism--a kind of "lesbian chic" (Faderman, 1991). The Great Depression of the 1930s, however, produced hardships for the lesbian community. It became more difficult for women to be independent. In Henry's sample,

for example, many women were married. While marriage was often an economic necessity, it also provided lesbians with a social front.

The most striking feature of lesbian social patterns was its marked gender differentiation--by the 1950s, described as the "butch-femme" distinction. The 1930s was the era of the "mannish lesbian," or as lesbians referred to themselves, the "dyke," "gay", or "drag." Those who chose the femme role were referred to as "queer bird" or "lavender." In the gay male subculture of the time there was a parallel distinction between effeminate men--the "queers" or "fairies" and masculine men--the "straights" (Chauncey, 1985). In the case of women, however, gender differentiation was intricately connected with the feminism of the times. Radclyffe Hall's 1928 novel, The Well of Loneliness, which articulated the lesbian identity of the mannish or butch woman, served as a cultural text or image which was used by feminist modernists of the 1920s and 1930s to challenge male dominance (Newton, 1984; Smith-Rosenberg, 1989). In looking at lesbian accounts during this period, gender differentiation needs to be interpreted as normative within the subculture as well as reflecting a feminist consciousness.

Gender differentiation is a theme that appears in both medical and lesbian-feminist discourses of the period. In analyzing these discourses, it is important to identify underlying objectives, that is what were the sex researchers

as opposed to the lesbian-feminists trying to accomplish. There is also the question of the way in which the discourses relate to each other. George Chauncey (1985), for example, has argued that the sexologists in their model of gender differentiation were reproducing the established social relations within the gay and lesbian subcultures--relations that served the needs and interests of the cultural communities.

Analysis

In analyzing the texts in the Henry monograph, I am going to choose two discourses, one which I will label "Heterosexual Adjustment," the other "Lesbian Emancipation." As Hollway (1989) suggests, discourses represent heuristic devices for organizing the textual material one is working with. My definition of heterosexual adjustment is based on what appeared in the medical and scientific literature on homosexuality at the time of the Henry study. Heterosexual adjustment refers to the extent to which a person's thoughts, feelings, and actions are consistent with the natural or "normal" sexual relations between men and women. Variations from such patterns reflect a sexual inversion, that is the person exhibits traits of the opposite sex and, as a consequence, experiences sexual urges towards members of the same sex. The etiology of sexual inversion is some combination of constitutional and early environmental influences; the latter determinant being amenable to

preventative measures in the form of normative gender role socialization. These propositions are predicated on the assumption that heterosexual object relations is an inherent component of the sex drive.

Lesbian emancipation is a discourse that is reflected in the period speeches and writings of such feminist and lesbian advocates as Emma Goldman, Gertrude Stein, Virginia Woolf, and Radclyffe Hall, as well as lyrics such as those by blues singer Ma Rainey and film images like a crossed-dressed Marlene Dietrich kissing a woman on the lips (see Katz, 1976, 1982, Russo, 1981). It refers to the free expression of lesbian desires and sensibilities. It incorporates a feminist agenda for emancipation from male domination in which women, through a masculine gender identification, compete on equal terms with men. Lesbian emancipation also comprises the goal of social acceptance for homosexuality in general and lesbian relationships in particular.

In analyzing accounts through the use of discourses, one has to be cognizant of several factors that are implicated in the discourses (Hollway, 1989). First of all, there are the various contexts--in the Henry study, as I have indicated, these are the background of the study, sex research, and the lesbian and gay community. Moreover, each of these contexts reflects power relationships in the larger societal context. There are also the subjects--the people giving the accounts, who they are referring to, and so

forth. It is also important to consider the relationship between the researchers and the participants, and in this regard to be sensitive to the power relationships involved. Finally, discourses relate to other discourses and, as a consequence, there may be contradictions within given accounts. I am now going to turn to four illustrative cases.

Marvel W.

Henry's (1941) general impression was:

> Marvel is a rosy-cheeked, business-like woman of thirty-eight, who chats pleasantly with the physician. She shows not only a willingness to cooperate but also pleasure in being identified with a study of this kind. Her insecurity is disguised somewhat by her critical attitude when she is confronted with the M-F test [the Terman-Miles Masculinity-Femininity test]. . .During the latter part of the interview and when the time of her intended departure had already passed she asked if she might telephone Ellen T. to explain that she would be a little late in getting home. Their conversation was that of animated newlyweds who were still very tender in addressing each other. Comfort and freedom from anxiety on the part of Ellen appeared to be Marvel's prime concern. At the same time Marvel indicated that she was dutiful and submissive. She explained that she and Ellen were "married" and she exhibited a plain gold wedding ring which she wore to symbolize their marriage. Marvel's seriousness about their marriage was such that she hesitated about signing herself as "Miss." After some painful reflection she remarked, "I suppose I have to put myself down as single."
>
> As a matter of fact their "married" relationship has already endured four years. As in the preferred heterosexual marriages, the first frenzy of their love has been replaced by a solid, friendly, mutual concern and affection which bids fair to continue. Their household is maintained jointly. (pp. 878, 880)

In this excerpt we get a sense of the power relationship involved--the vulnerability of Marvel who sees

herself in a very submissive role in relation to Henry. She is also conflicted between the two discourses I have identified. She wants to express her lesbian emancipation by showing off her wedding ring, yet she ends up submissively identifying herself as "single," conforming to the demands of heterosexual adjustment she sees personified in the interviewer. Henry, for his part, appears to be sympathetic to the feelings Marvel has about her partner but, nevertheless, he sees this through the prism of "preferred heterosexual marriages."

When we look at what Marvel says in her own words, she is caught up in the contradictions between the two discourses. In the following excerpt, she expresses a longing for a child but not as a symbol of a positive unconventional union of two women. Rather, it is framed within a motif of heterosexual adjustment:

> Several times I have thought of marriage because it seemed a kind of security, some kind of shelter. Now the only home I will have is with Ellen. I never wanted children. If I were a normal woman--I hate that phrase-- and had had a child in my early twenties, that would be one thing. I don't think I would bring up a child with the best integrated personality. I don't think of homosexuality as a transmissible character but I don't think it would produce a normal psychological background for a child. (Henry, 1941, p. 890)

And yet in her very next statement, she does acknowledge an ideal which reflects lesbian emancipation: "I have thought of the union in a child as very sweet if it were biologically possible to have a child through a woman" (Henry, 1941, p. 890). While struggling with her own

insecurities about being a lesbian, Marvel is also very much identified with a discourse of lesbian emancipation as reflected in the following excerpt:

> Lots of people abhor homosexuality and I'm not intellectually free enough to ignore that. It's a cause of my resentment against society. I suppose it goes back to capitalism. Women have been an exploited class like Jews and negroes, and women are seeking to achieve some freedom. . . .Being a feminist I have been seeking to be a human being and not just one sex. That might make a woman turn away from heterosexuality. It happened to be may only course, a resentment that I happened to be what people say is not normal. (Henry, 1941, p. 891)

A few passages later, Marvel again reveals her vulnerability, both in her relationship to Henry and in her internalization of the conventions of heterosexual adjustment:

> Don't you want to know anything about my weakness? I'm afraid of being left alone, without love. I'm so afraid, even now sometimes. I know what causes it but I can't get out of it. If my grandmother had kissed me or if I had been breast fed I would have been different.
>
> I think I knew all the time what my destiny was. I was afraid to have someone take me to pieces. I always resisted the idea of psychoanalysis until recently. (Henry, 1941, p. 892)

I think Marvel's last statement reflects her ambivalence in being involved in the study--the personal vulnerability of being taken to "pieces" by an omnipotent psychiatrist but yet her resolve to go through with it for the sake of Jan Gay and the cause of lesbian and homosexual emancipation.

In Henry's commentary, he acknowledges her psychological insecurity and within his perspective of

heterosexual adjustment reverses her expression of lesbian emancipation by declaring, "In the atmosphere of Ellen's radical views Marvel has come to project some of her own difficulties onto social and economic conditions" (Henry, 1941, pp. 895-896).

Ellen T.

Marvel's partner, Ellen, was also a participant in the study. Henry's (1941) general impression:

> Ellen comes to the interviews looking like an orphan waif who has been cast upon the street without family or friends. . . .Although Ellen is now thirty-eight and has experienced enough to be somewhat hardened or philosophical she is easily moved to tears in recalling incidents of childhood or in speaking of what she feels is injustice to homosexuals. She is eager to help in this study and to know what progress is being made. She is not only attentive and cooperative but patiently relates in detail her experiences. At the same time she is cautious about any exposure of herself which might lead to personal identification. (pp. 787, 789)

Like Marvel, Ellen is caught up in her desire to be a participant in the cause of eradicating homosexual injustice but at the personal expense of revealing her own personal struggle with being a lesbian, as well as the risk of revealing her true personal identity. In her own account, Ellen expresses lesbian emancipation in the following excerpts:

> [S]ix years ago I met Marvel, a successful professional woman my own age. We are congenial and we expect to have a most permanent relationship. We have exchanged wedding rings and consider ourselves married to one another. . . .Certain things have come up lately about homosexuality. It seems incredible that people can be intelligent about certain things and so prejudiced

> about that. I am particularly anxious to see some form of enlightenment on this subject. I think it is unpardonable to have such ignorance.
>
> I wish I was a stronger person than I am. I would like to be able to come out in the open and raise hell about the attitude toward homosexuality but I haven't the courage. I think it's economic. If I had enough money I would. If you have plenty of money anything is all right. (Henry, 1941, pp. 794-795).

A few passages later, at the end of her account, the contradictory discourse of heterosexual adjustment is revealed in the following:

> I still feel that my mother did me inestimable harm but she, in turn, was a victim of social conditions. My whole attitude toward her has mellowed some but I blame her for my whole development. I think it's purely psychological but no matter how much you understand it now you can't turn around and be attracted to men.
>
> In the beginning I was very silly about homosexuality. Never for a moment did I think it was anything wrong. I felt very superior about it. Of course, I know now that that is stupid but you can turn it into constructive fields if you are clear enough about it. (Henry, 1941, p. 795)

While glimmers of emancipation appear in Ellen's account, she seems overwhelmed by her sense of being at variance with what, in her own view, is socially acceptable.

Henry (1941)in his commentary states:

> Ellen still feels that her mother did her inestimable harm. . . .Her bitterness is now projected on society. . .At present Ellen is an ardent reformer but if Marvel should fail her she might turn out to be one of those "antisocial, disruptive people," a sadist or a fascist. Ellen thus reveals the close interrelationship between her personal life and her attitude toward social problems, an attitude which can be readily comprehended as a natural reaction to her own personal conflicts. (pp. 797-798)

Once again, Henry reverses social protest into intrapsychic pathology. Here, he sounds an ominous note of

the political danger posed by those whose lifestyle is unconventional.

Alberta I.

In contrast with the first two cases, the next two illustrate women who, in noncontradictory fashion, accepted their lesbian identity. The first, Alberta, is described by Henry (1941) as "a small, intense woman of thirty [who]. . .is ambitious and industrious and no doubt will increase her success as an artist. She is, however, hard and calculating and there is a lack of feminine sweetness" (pp. 855, 857).

In her account, Alberta gives a vivid portrait of her masculine identification:

> I'm active, I'm a very active lover, and I wouldn't dream of being passive. I have no inhibitions about activity in love. I can stop an orgasm whenever I want to. If I let myself go I can finish in two minutes or I can wait for hours. I can realize the physical experience of being a man. I can look at a woman exactly as a man does. I feel so much like a man that I don't understand how a woman falls in love with a woman. (Henry, 1941, p. 863)

In this passage, Alberta's gender reversal symbolizes the lesbian sexuality of the 1930s (Newton, 1984). It also reveals an inherent dilemma in the lesbian ideology of the period. Sexual desire was assumed to be masculine. Lesbian sexuality therefore was identified with the male role; the so-called mannish lesbian embodied sexuality. As Esther Newton (1984) points out: "If sexual desire is masculine, and if the feminine woman only wants to attract men, then the womanly lesbian cannot logically exist" (p. 293). But

feminine lesbians did exist (in fact, their accounts are included in Henry's sample). The womanly lesbian posed problems for lesbian writers of the day, and it also represented an anomaly for Henry and other sex researchers (see Minton, 1986).

Alberta's positive lesbian identity is poignantly expressed in her closing remarks:

> I have a great confidence in the future. I think I'm going to be a very well-known artist. I shall probably have a home of my own some day. I hope I can find a person I can share the rest of my life with. Homosexuality hasn't interfered with my work. It has made it what it is.
>
> I am happiest when the woman I care the most for has similar esthetic and creative interests. So far I haven't found anyone to whom I can ally myself for any great length of time. I feel, however, that this would be the ideal relationship and some day I will meet someone with whom I will want to establish a home and a permanent relationship, a union. (Henry, 1941, p. 864)

Henry's (1941) analysis of Alberta, couched in the terms of heterosexual adjustment and the etiology of early childhood experiences, is exemplified in his concluding comments:

> She feels so much like a man that she does not understand how a woman falls in love with a woman.
>
> In this compromise Alberta has realized what she missed in childhood. She not only has gained control over other women who are beautiful, as was her stepmother, but since these woman are decidedly masculine she has gained control over her father. (p. 866)

Kathleen M.

Henry's (1941) description begins: "Kathleen brings with her the breezy atmosphere of an aggressive business

woman. She is now thirty years old. Probably no amount of artifice would conceal her masculine attributes" (p. 830).

In her account, Kathleen speaks about her experiences in a series of unhappy love affairs with other women and how she finally gave into the social pressure of seeking a heterosexual adjustment:

> Everyone was after me to see if I could enjoy myself with men. They said I ought to sleep with a man. A psychologist said I should and I slept with him. I just didn't care. (Henry, 1941, p. 838)

Kathleen then goes on to relate how she met her partner:

> About two years ago I happened to be in an apartment one night with a girl whom I had known socially. I started to kiss her and she said, "Don't do that, I'm afraid of you." When we woke up the next morning I knew she wanted me.
>
> We have been living together ever since. She had not had any previous experience with women and had been in love with a man for eight years. . . .She didn't want to become intimate with me because she was afraid of getting too interested. Other girls have tried to seduce her and they have tried to seduce me but we have remained faithful to each other. . . .She is an actress and occasionally has to go out of town. When she is away a week I get moody.
>
> Last year we adopted a baby. (Henry, 1941, pp.838-839)

In these passages, Kathleen reveals how she (and apparently her partner, as well) develops a positive lesbian identity based on the strength of a committed relationship. This life history pattern of overcoming the domination of heterosexual adjustment and replacing it with a discourse of lesbian emancipation is reflected in Kathleen's closing comments:

> When Mother told me about homosexuality she told me it was abnormal, that there was no satisfaction and that the result was an empty life. I disagree. I don't care what people think and I avoid people who ask personal questions. My personal life is my own affair. Since we have been living together our lives are fuller and happier. We create things together and we are devoted to our baby. (Henry, 1941, p. 839)

In his interpretation, Henry (1941) is wary of Kathleen's expression of fulfillment. He opines:

> Kathleen is inclined to feel that she has solved many of her problems. . . .She feels she has demonstrated that homosexuality does not result in an empty life. . .She seems inclined to feel that she and her friend will remain faithful to each other and that their lives will continue to be fuller and happier then they had been. (pp. 841-842)

His final observation is: "Homosexuality an expression of innate virility, of rivalry with brother, and possibly of identification with the father" (Henry, 1941, p. 842).

Conclusions and Implications

This preliminary analysis of the texts in Henry's Sex Variants has focused on the autobiographical accounts of the research participants. Through the use of discourses which are historically and socially contextualized, my objective has been to seek out the meaning of these accounts, and by so doing to gain an understanding and explanation of the lives of lesbians at a particular point in history.

What does the discourse analysis reveal? First of all, even with the limitation of selecting four accounts, we can conclude that the life experiences, outlooks, concerns, and goals of these women reveal considerable variability.

Through the discourses of heterosexual adjustment and lesbian emancipation, however, we can gain a sense of the way in which power is implicated. These women were all struggling with their subjugation to heterosexual adjustment. By being a part of the study, as well as a part of the lesbian/gay community, and through their own life experiences, they were also attempting to empower themselves. In the cases of Marvel and Ellen, the contradictions between adjustment and emancipation seemed paramount. On the other hand, Alberta and Kathleen appeared to have turned the corner towards emancipation, though even they had to be vigilant in defending themselves from the threat of subjugation as in their relationship with Henry.

As for the discourse in Henry's texts, heterosexual adjustment prevails. In further analyses of Henry's accounts, I will want to look for instances of an emancipatory discourse, for example how does he deal with the anomaly of lesbians who were feminine. I will also need to look at Henry's texts giving the background of the study as well as his extensive text on overall impressions. From a preliminary look, however, Henry's allegiance to adjustment reflects power in terms of social control. Henry, as well as the sponsoring Committee on Sex Variants, was concerned with claiming a role for psychiatry and social science in general, and for sex research in particular. By arguing that homosexuality was pathological rather than criminal, sex researchers could insure that they would play

a vital role in maintaining the status quo. Homosexuality, which was seen as a threat to social conventions, could be prevented, and even if it became manifest, psychiatric treatment was possible.

What does this analysis say about the state of psychiatry and social science. Should social science be concerned with contributing to the administrative efficiency of maintaining the social order at the cost of oppressing those in the margins of society; should social scientists be oriented to social control; should they be "servants of power?" Or, as I would argue, should they be concerned with the welfare of the people they study; should they be guided by an emancipatory interest. One very significant way of incorporating an emancipatory ethic in our research, is to be able to develop a sense of identification with our subjects, to reduce the distance or opposition between researcher and subject (Hollway, 1989; Morawski & Steele, 1991; Sampson, 1991).

To Henry's credit, he did record the voices of lesbians and gay men, though unfortunately, at the time, he did not hear them (later in his career, his work became connected with the gay rights movement--see Minton, 1986). Through a method such as discourse analysis, however, we can reclaim those voices; we can give meaning to their accounts; we can seek to identify with their struggles, and we can draw on such historical inquiries as sources for empowering those who are struggling and resisting the forces of social

control today. One of the building blocks for an emancipatory science is the need to develop a methodology which relates to the concrete life experiences of the people we study. Their voices must be heard and their accounts rendered meaningful through interpretive analyses that place those voices in historical context.

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